



# St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



*The Nativity of Our Lord*

*-Christmas Eve 2016-*

# ✠ GATHERING ✠

## Prelude and Announcements

Gathering Hymn O Come, All Ye Faithful  
*For music turn to Hymn 283 in the Red Hymnal*

1. **O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!**  
**O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;**  
**Come and behold him, born the king of angels:**

*Refrain* **O come, let us adore him,**  
**O come, let us adore him,**  
**O come, let us adore him,**  
**Christ the Lord!**

2. **The highest, most holy, light of light eternal,**  
**born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;**  
**Son of the Father now in flesh appearing!** *Refrain*

3. **Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,**  
**sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!**  
**Glory to God in the highest:** *Refrain*

4. **Yea, Lord we greet thee, born this happy morning;**  
**Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n!**  
**Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:** *Refrain*

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711-1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-1880, sts. 1,3-4; tr. Unknown, st.2. Music: attr. John Francis Wade

## Greeting (2 Corinthians 13:13)

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C: And also with you.**

## Christmas Dialog

*Adapted from "The Church Year" in Kneeling in Bethlehem by Ann Weems*

A1: We are freed to free others.

A2: We are affirmed to affirm others.

A3: We are loved to love others.

**C: We are family;**  
**we are community.**

A1: We are the church triumphant-

**C: you, me, anyone who would come unto the Lord-**

A2: renewed, redirected, empowered

A3: to change things and lives

A1: together in love and wholeness.

**C: We are the Lord's church,  
the church of justice and mercy,  
the people sent:**

A2: to visit the prisoners,

A3: to heal the sick

A1: to clothe the naked

A2: to feed the hungry

A3: to reconcile

A1: to be alleluias when there is no music.

**C: The mantle is upon our shoulders.**

**Joy is apparent in our living.**

**We are the church.**

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray.

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen**

† WORD †

First Reading Isaiah 9:2-7

<sup>2</sup>The people who walked in darkness

have seen a great light;

those who lived in a land of deep darkness—

on them light has shined.

<sup>3</sup>You have multiplied the nation,

you have increased its joy;

they rejoice before you

as with joy at the harvest,

as people exult when dividing plunder.

<sup>4</sup>For the yoke of their burden,

and the bar across their shoulders,

the rod of their oppressor,  
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

<sup>5</sup>For all the boots of the tramping warriors  
and all the garments rolled in blood  
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

<sup>6</sup>For a child has been born for us,  
a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

<sup>7</sup>His authority shall grow continually,  
and there shall be endless peace  
for the throne of David and his kingdom.

He will establish and uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onward and forevermore.

The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

*After the reading the reader may say: The Word of the Lord*

**C: Thanks be to God.**

Scripture Poetry Psalm 8 (*Read responsively*)

A: Lord our God,  
the whole world tells  
the greatness of your name.  
Your glory reaches  
beyond the stars.

**C: Even the babble of infants  
declares your strength,  
your power to halt  
the enemy and the avenger.**

A: I see your handiwork  
in the heavens:  
the moon and the stars  
you set in place.

**C: What is humankind  
that you remember them,  
the human race that you care for them?**

A: You treat them like gods,  
dressing them in glory and splendor.

**C: You give them charge of the earth,**

**laying all at their feet:**

A: cattle and sheep,  
wild beasts,  
birds of the sky,  
fish of the sea,  
every swimming creature.

**C: Lord our God,  
the whole world tells  
the greatness of your name.**

Second Reading Hebrews 1:1-4

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, <sup>2</sup>but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds.

<sup>3</sup>He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, <sup>4</sup>having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

*After the reading the reader may say: The Word of the Lord*

**C: Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation (Luke 2:10-11)

**C: Alleluia. I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. Alleluia.**

Gospel Reading Luke 2:1-20

*The gospel is announced:*

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter.

**C: Glory to you O Lord.**

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

<sup>8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

<sup>10</sup>But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army, praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup>“Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

<sup>15</sup>When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

<sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

*After the reading:*

P: The Gospel of the Lord

**C: Praise to you O Christ.**

### Sermon

Hymn of the Day Hark! The Herald Angels Sing  
*For music turn to Hymn 270 in the Red Hymnal*

**1. Hark! The herald angels sing,  
“Glory to the newborn king;  
peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled.”  
Joyful, all you nations rise;  
join the triumph of the skies;  
with angelic hosts proclaim,  
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”**

*Refrain*

**Hark! The herald angels sing,  
“Glory to new the newborn king!”**

**2. Christ, by highest heaven adored,**

**Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
late in time behold him come,  
offspring of a virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh the God-head see!  
Hail, incarnate deity!  
Pleased as man with us to dwell,  
Jesus, our Emmanuel!      *Refrain***

**3. Hail the heav'n born Prince of peace!  
Hail the Sun of righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings,  
ris'n with healing in his wings.  
Mild he lays his glory by,  
born that we no more may die,  
born to raise each child of earth,  
born to give us second birth.      *Refrain***

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt. Music: Felix Mendelssohn, 1809-1847; arr. William H. Cummings, 1831-1915

*Prayer of the Church*

“Bless What Eludes My Grasp” in *Guerillas of Grace* by Ted Loder.

*Peace*

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C: And also with you.**

P: We share that peace with one another.

*The congregation may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.*

†      MEAL      †

*Offering & Special Music*

*Hymn of Thanksgiving*      What Child Is This?

*(For music turn to Hymn 296 in the Red Hymnal)*

**1. What Child is this, who, laid to rest,  
On Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthem sweet  
While shepherds watch are keeping?  
This, this is Christ the king,  
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing,  
Haste, haste to bring him laud,**

**The babe, the son of Mary!**

2. **Why lies he in such mean estate  
Where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here  
The silent Word is pleading.  
Nails, spear shall pierce him through,  
The cross be borne for me, for you;  
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,  
The babe, the son of Mary!**
3. **So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;  
Come, peasant, king, to own him.  
The King of kings salvation brings;  
Let loving hearts enthrone him.  
Raise, raise the song on high,  
The virgin sings her lullaby;  
Joy, joy, for Christ is born,  
The babe, the son of Mary!**

Text: William Dix; Music: English Ballad, 16<sup>th</sup> century

*Great Thanksgiving*

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

**C: We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

P: It is indeed right, our duty, and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus the Christ. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God who we cannot see. And so, with all the armies of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join in their unending hymn:



*(Isaiah 6:3, spoken)*

**C: Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

P: In the night in which he was handed over our Lord Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples saying, "Take and eat. This is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me."

*Lord's Prayer*

P: Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**C: Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.**

*Invitation to Communion*

P: The Lord is come. Let every heart receive its Savior.

*Communion Distribution*

*Welcome to the Lord's Supper! All who are baptized are invited to receive communion. You will receive bread from the communion assistant. You may receive wine from either the common cup or in an individual glass. If you would like to receive in a glass please pick one up from the tray as you approach the altar rail. White grape juice is available in the individual glasses for those who do not wish to take wine. St. John's members, if you have not filled out a communion record card in 2016 please do so. As we commune together*

*everyone is invited to sing the following hymns:*

*Lamb of God (Page 39 of the Blue Hymnal)*

**283** *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear (Red Hymnal)*

**289** *Angels We Have Heard on High (Red Hymnal)*

*Communion Blessing* *After all have communed the pastor will say:*

P: The body and the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

**C: Amen.**

### *Lighting of Candles*

*Candlelight Reading* John 1:1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

<sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. <sup>14</sup>And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

*Candlelight Hymn* Silent Night, Holy Night

*(For music see Hymn 281 in the Red Hymnal)*

**1. Silent night, holy night!**

**All is calm, all is bright  
round yon virgin mother and child.  
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,  
sleep in heavenly peace,  
sleep in heavenly peace.**

2. **Silent night, holy night!**  
**Shepherds quake at the sight;**  
**glories stream from heaven afar,**  
**heav'nly hosts sing, allelulia!**  
**Christ, the Savior, is born!**  
**Christ, the Savior, is born!**
3. **Silent night, holy night!**  
**Son of God, love's pure light**  
**radiant beams from your holy face,**  
**with the dawn of redeeming grace,**  
**Jesus, Lord, at your birth,**  
**Jesus, Lord, at your birth.**

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792-1849, tr. John F. Young, 1820-1885. Music: Franz Gruber, 1787-1863

✠ SENDING ✠

*Blessing*

P: May Christ, in his coming, fill you with grace and truth, and give you peace this Christmas season. Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

*Sending Hymn* Joy to the World  
*For music turn to Hymn 267 in the Red Hymnal*

1. **Joy to the world, the Lord is come!**  
**Let earth receive her king;**  
**let ev'ry heart prepare him room**  
**and heav'n and nature sing,**  
**and heav'n and nature sing,**  
**and heav'n and heav'n and nature sing.**
2. **Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!**  
**Let all their songs employ,**  
**while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains**  
**repeat the sounding joy**  
**repeat the sounding joy**  
**repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

3. **No more let sin and sorrow grow  
nor thorns infest the ground;  
he comes to make his blessings flow  
far as the curse is found,  
far as the curse is found,  
far as, far as the curse is found.**

4. **He rules the world with truth and grace  
and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness  
and wonders of his love  
and wonders of his love  
and wonders, wonders of his love.**

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748. Music: English melody, 18<sup>th</sup> century; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792-1872

*Dismissal*

P: Go in peace, serve the Lord.

C: **God's work. Our hands.**

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